

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-6, 8-10, 13 and 31 are currently pending. Claims 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, and 14-30 are canceled.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-10, 13 and 17-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamath et al. (6,335,029) in view of Ecer et al. (4,486,247). The Examiner contends that Kamath teaches the claimed coating, but fails to teach a carbon implant within the stent body. The Examiner then concluded that it is well known for stainless steel materials to contain carbon to enhance the strength and hardness of the stainless steel, citing in support of this position, Ecer.

First, Applicants assume that the Examiner has simply made an error with the listed claims that are being rejected since claims 17-30 have been withdrawn from consideration and have not been examined. Regardless, non-elected, withdrawn claims 17-30 have been canceled.

Second, Applicants respectfully submit that the references in combination fail to teach (1) a plasma-polymerized polymer film layer deposited over the stent body surface and in intimate contact with the stent body surface; and (2) the plasma-polymerized film layer is chemically bonded to the carbon deposit.

As a matter of fact, Kamath teaches that its plasma-polymerized layer 20 is used as a barrier layer over a drug/polymer layer 5 (see Figure 1). Accordingly, not only is the plasma-polymerized layer 20 of Kamath not in intimate contact with the stent surface, but also it is impossible for it to be bonded to the carbon deposit, should there be a carbon deposit in the Kamath stent. The presence of the drug/polymer layer 5 as an intermediary layer would prevent the plasma layer 20 from bonding to the carbon. The Examiner is directed to col. 7, lines 44-47, and col. 8 lines 31-44, where Kamath expressly teaches the use of its plasma layer as a barrier and not in contact with the stent surface.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe, based on the amendments to the claims herein and the above remarks, that this application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request that it be passed to issue.

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